



City of Gaithersburg Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Richard Montgomery High School Junior Lydia Wei Takes Top Honor in Gaithersburg Book Festival High School Poetry Contest

Gaithersburg, Md. – May 20, 2019 – Lydia Wei, a Gaithersburg, Md., resident who is a junior at Richard Montgomery High School, was awarded first prize in the [Gaithersburg Book Festival poetry contest](#) for high school students for her poem “[Bulletholes](#).”

Second prize went to Oak Hill, Va., resident Esther Palmer, a senior at Oakton High School for “[The Music](#).” Gaithersburg, Md., resident Olivia Cordle, a sophomore at Quince Orchard High School, received both third prize and Fan Favorite for “[Concern Yourself Ghazal](#).”

Prizes for first-, second- and third-place winners, provided courtesy of [Johns Hopkins University Montgomery County](#), were \$250, \$100 and \$50, respectively, with the fan favorite winner receiving \$25.

[Maryland Poet Laureate Grace Cavalieri](#) judged the poetry contest and, along with Festival Founder and City of Gaithersburg Mayor Jud Ashman, presented winners with their prizes during the Festival on May 18. Cavalieri also selected two honorable mentions, “[For Mama, In Belief](#)” by Hyattsville, Md., resident Emma Allen, a senior at Eleanor Roosevelt High School; and “[Hunting in November](#)” by North Potomac, Md., resident Emily Tian, a senior at Richard Montgomery High School.

To be eligible for the poetry contest, students had to be enrolled in grades 9-12 at a public or private school, or be in a homeschool program, for the 2018-19 school year. Additionally, entrants had to reside in Maryland, Virginia or the District of Columbia.

About the Gaithersburg Book Festival

The Gaithersburg Book Festival is an annual all-day celebration of books, writers and literary excellence. One of the premier literary events in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, the 2019 Festival is scheduled for Saturday, May 18, on the grounds of Gaithersburg City Hall, in Olde Towne Gaithersburg, Md. Activities will include author appearances, discussions and book signings; writing workshops; a Children’s Village; onsite sales of new and used books; literary exhibitors and food, drink, ice cream and more. FREE admission and accessible shuttle will be available from Shady Grove

Metro and Lakeforest Mall. The Gaithersburg Book Festival also hosts author events in Montgomery County throughout the year as a way to encourage continued appreciation for all things literary. For more information please visit www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org or follow on Twitter [@GburgBookFest](https://twitter.com/GburgBookFest).

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